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To: Pamela Vozza
Subject: ASRS Employer Update



Employer Update

A publication of the Arizona State Retirement System

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Welcome to the new Employer Update E-newsletter!

This newsletter has been developed to provide our employer-partners with important news and updates related to their business interactions with the ASRS. We hope you find it useful and easy-to-read.

Regular communication is important as information and procedures are updated frequently. If there are additional staff at your agency whom you feel would benefit from receiving this e-newsletter, please feel free to forward this email. Our email recipient list is made up of registered users of the secure employer ASRS website. Please be sure to keep your user and contact information up-to-date.

Some of this information may be important to your employees as well. We would appreciate if you could provide us with contact information for your internal communications person(s). We would be happy to include them in any future ASRS news distributions that may be of interest to your staff. You can forward contact information to: EmployerRelations@azasrs.gov

Employer Liaisons: Your One Call!

The Employer Relations department of the ASRS currently serves over 700 employers. Each employer-partner has an assigned **Employer Liaison** who can:

> **SERVE AS OMBUDSMAN** between the ASRS and the employer, working to resolve any issues or concerns the employer may have.

> **PROVIDE PAYROLL** information and support, including the online contribution reporting system, adjustments, error corrections and payroll reporting requirements.

> **CONDUCT EMPLOYER TRAINING** in all areas needed for ASRS membership, including Social Security Section 218 agreements, membership accounting, contribution accounting, payroll processing, audits, employee eligibility, compensation determinations, changes in applicable state and federal laws, and participation in the ASRS tax-deferred supplemental savings plan.

FOR EMPLOYER ASSISTANCE, please contact your assigned Employer Liaison regarding any of these issues. If you reach a voice message, please leave a detailed message and we will return your call within 24 hours.

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Employer Liaison

Contribution Rate for FY2013

Contribution rates for next fiscal year have been set, with a slight increase of 0.40% to both the employer and employee portion.

The new rate, effective July 1, 2013, will be 11.54% for both the member and the employer. For more information, visit:

<https://www.azasrs.gov/web/ContributionRates.do>

Alternate Contribution Rate

The Alternate Contribution Rate (ACR), paid by the employer on behalf of eligible return to work retirees, has been set at 9.20% for the next fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013.

As a reminder, beginning January 1, 2013, a late charge will be assessed on alternate contributions paid more than 14 calendar days after the pay period ending date.

Also, when completing the ACR data file for your ACR submissions, the final column labeled "Retiree Termination Date" should contain the date associated with the final ACR submission the employer will make for that retiree, otherwise it should be left blank. This date is not the retiree's pre-retirement termination date (a common misunderstanding) but the date of the return to work retiree's most recent last day worked associated with the ACR submission.

The ACR reporting process has been improved to alleviate some of the technical issues some employers have experienced.

To learn more, visit the Alternate Contribution Rate section of the Employer Page:

<http://www.azasrs.gov/web/Employers.do>

New Employee Enrollment and Information

New employees must complete the online enrollment process in order to access their ASRS personal accounts online. Please be sure you are giving new employees the online enrollment URL and your employer's unique region code. The Online Enrollment flyer (which is part of the New Employee Packet) was created to assist you with disseminating information to eligible new hires about the benefits of enrolling online.

In addition to the Online Enrollment flyer, the ASRS provides a variety of documents which employers should provide to their eligible new hires as part of a Welcome Packet. These six documents, available on the Employers section of the ASRS website, are regularly updated and should be printed out by the employer. They can be placed in the New Employee tri-folders which the ASRS can provide to you upon request.

You can find all six New Employee documents on the Employer

602-240-2147
michaelc@azasrs.gov

**DON'T KNOW WHO YOUR ASSIGNED
LIAISON IS?**

Email Employer Relations for assistance:

employerrelations@azasrs.gov

**FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE,
PLEASE NOTE:**

In order to continue providing employers with the high level of service you've come to expect, please continue to refer your employees to the ASRS website or to Member Services for assistance with their personal accounts:

**For Online Member Account
Management:**

<https://www.azasrs.gov/web/Login.do>

To Contact Member Services:

<https://www.azasrs.gov/web/ContactUs.do>

Page of the ASRS
website: <https://www.azasrs.gov/web/Employers.do>

If you need a supply of the folders, please email us at:
EmployerRelations@azasrs.gov

Reimbursement for Health Insurance Premium Benefit

The ASRS Reimbursement of Medical and/or Dental Cost form has been revised and is available by logging on to your secure employer account on the ASRS website. Employers who submit forms on behalf of eligible employees in January 2013 for the July-December six-month period should use the updated form.

As a reminder, the form may be used for return to work retirees or LTD participants who:

- retired or became disabled before August 2, 2012, AND...
- who have insurance coverage as part of an ASRS employer-sponsored group plan for active employees, AND...
- who have out-of-pocket costs associated with their health care premiums.

Questions regarding eligibility for the health insurance premium benefit should be directed to your employer's assigned ASRS Employer Liaison.

Follow this link to log into the secure Employer secure of the ASRS website:

<https://www.azasrs.gov/web/EmployerLogin.do>

Online Ending Payroll Verification

Ending Payroll Verification (EPV) forms are required when an employee retires, requests a refund of contributions or dies prior to retirement. As of October 1, 2012, the ASRS no longer accepts paper EPV forms. EPV submissions must now be completed online.

You can find the Online Ending Payroll Verification Guide here:

https://www.azasrs.gov/content/pdf/Ending_Payroll_Verif_Guide.pdf

If you need access to the Online Ending Payroll Verification application to complete the forms, please contact your ASRS website Employer Administrator, or your employer's Ending Payroll Verification Manager.

Service Purchase and Elimination of PLS

The Service Purchase benefit allows active members of the ASRS, and members who are receiving benefits under the ASRS Long Term Disability Income Plan, to buy past credited service time under specific qualifying categories. Adding additional service credit may increase your monthly lifelong retirement benefit and/or qualify you for retirement at an earlier date.

Members must have five years of credited service prior to initiating a request for service purchase, which must be initiated prior to termination of employment.

Important Notice: The payment option to use a partial lump sum (PLS) distribution at the time of retirement to pay for a service purchase invoice is scheduled to be eliminated for service purchase requests received by the ASRS on or after Jan. 6, 2013.

If your employees would like to learn more about the ASRS Service Purchase program, direct them to our website:

<https://www.azasrs.gov/web/ServicePurchase.do>

Upcoming Legislative Issues

The 51st Session of the Arizona Legislature is scheduled to open on Jan. 14, 2013. The ASRS will again be providing frequent updates on retirement-related legislation. You can see past legislative actions and follow the upcoming legislative session by visiting our Legislation page:

<https://www.azasrs.gov/web/Legislation.do>

ASRS Employer Manual

The Employer Manual is a complete guide to your day-to-day responsibilities related to the ASRS. This online guide provides valuable resources which should answer all of your routine questions.

View or download a copy here:

https://www.azasrs.gov/content/pdf/ASRS_Employer_Manual.pdf